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## What is claimed is:

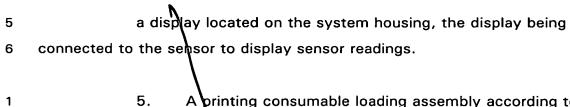
1	<ol> <li>In an imaging system including a system housing and a</li> </ol>
2	printing consumable holding assembly within the system housing, a printing
3	consumable loading assembly comprising the following:

at least one consumable-containing cartridge;

at least one opening in the system housing having a size and shape adapted to permit the consumable-containing cartridge to pass therethrough; and

a guide assembly connected to the imaging system within the housing and adapted to receive a consumable-containing cartridge as it is inserted through the opening in the system housing, the guide assembly guiding the consumable-containing cartridge into an in-use position within the printing consumable holding assembly.

- 2. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 1, further comprising a control actuator connected to the imaging system and to the guide assembly.
- 3. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim
  2, wherein the control actuator comprises an ejection mechanism connected to
  the imaging system and to the guide assembly, the ejection mechanism being
  adapted and constructed to selectively eject a consumable-containing cartridge
  from the holding assembly.
- 4. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim
  3, further comprising the following:
- a sensor adapted and constructed to sense the quantity of consumable within the consumable-containing cartridge; and



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5. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 3, wherein the control actuator comprises the following:

a sensor adapted and constructed to sense the quantity of consumable within the consumable-containing cartridge; and

an electronic latch connected to the sensor and to the ejection mechanism, the electronic latch being adapted and constructed to automatically actuate the ejection mechanism to eject the consumable-containing cartridge when the sensor indicates that the quantity of consumable within the consumable-containing cartridge is at a predetermined level.

- A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 6.
- 2 wherein the at least one consumable-containing cartridge comprises a
- plurality of consumable-containing cartridges. 3

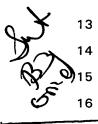
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- A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 7. 6, wherein the at least one opening in the system housing comprises a plurality
- of openings in the system housing. 3
- A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 8. 1 7, further comprising a registration key mechanism on the openings in the 2 3 system housing and the consumable-containing cartridges, the respective consumable-containing cartridges being configured to fit only into corresponding 5 openings in the system housing,
- A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 9. 1
- 8, wherein the registration key methanism comprises the following: 2
- a respective fin on each of the consumable-containing cartridges, 3
- the shape and position of the fin indicating a particular aspect of the 4
- consumable within the cartridge; and \ 5

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a respective slot in each of the openings, the slots corresponding in shape and position to the fins on the respective consumable-containing cartridges.

- 10. A printing consumable foading assembly according to claim 6, wherein the at least one opening in the system housing comprises a single opening.
  - 11. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 10, wherein the holding assembly includes a carousel adapted and constructed to hold a plurality of consumable-containing cartridges, and the guide assembly is mounted within the system housing in a position aligned for loading cartridges into the carousel, the carousel being configured to rotate to a first position to receive cartridges loaded via the opening and the guide assembly, and a second position for image forming.
  - 12. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim1, further comprising a hinged door over the at least one opening in the system housing.
  - 13. In an imaging system including a system housing having an access door movable between an open position and a closed position, and a printing consumable holding assembly within the system housing, a printing consumable loading assembly comprising the following:
    - a consumable-containing cartridge;
  - at least one opening in the system housing having a size and shape adapted to permit the consumable-containing cartridge to pass therethrough; and
  - a guide assembly connected to the imaging system within the housing and adapted to receive and grasp a consumable-containing cartridge as it is inserted through the opening in the system housing, the cartridge being configured to be inserted into the opening with the access door of the system in



its closed position, and the guide assembly being adapted and constructed to guide the consumable-containing cartridge into an in-use position within the printing consumable holding assembly with the access door of the system in its closed position.

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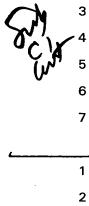
14. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 13, further comprising a control actuator connected to the imaging system and to the guide assembly, the control actuator including an ejection mechanism connected to the imaging system and to the guide assembly, the ejection mechanism being adapted and constructed to selectively eject a consumable-containing cartridge from the holding assembly.

15. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 14, further comprising the following:

a sensor adapted and constructed to sense the quantity of consumable within the consumable containing cartridge; and

a display located on the system housing, the display being connected to the sensor to display sensor readings.

- 16. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim 13, wherein the at least one consumable-containing cartridge comprises a plurality of consumable-containing cartridges.
- 1 17. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim
  2 16, wherein the at least one opening in the system housing comprises a plurality
  3 of openings in the system housing.
- 18. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim
  17, further comprising a registration key mechanism on the openings in the
  3 system housing and the consumable-containing cartridges, the respective
  4 consumable-containing cartridges being configured to fit only into corresponding
  5 openings in the system housing.



19. A printing consumable loading assembly according to claim
13, wherein the holding assembly includes a carousel adapted and constructed
to hold a plurality of consumable-containing cartridges, and the guide assembly
is mounted within the system housing in a position aligned for loading cartridges
into the carousel, the carousel being adapted and constructed to rotate to a first
position to receive cartridges loaded via the opening and the guide assembly,
and a second position for image forming.

20. In an imaging system including a system housing having an access door movable between an open position and a closed position, and a printing consumable holding assembly within the system housing, a method of loading printing consumables, the method comprising the following steps:

providing a consumable-containing cartridge;

providing least one opening in the system housing having a size and shape adapted to permit the consumable-containing cartridge to pass therethrough;

providing a guide assembly connected to the imaging system within the housing, the guide assembly being adapted to receive and grasp a consumable-containing cartridge as it is inserted through the opening in the system housing;

inserting the cartridge into the opening;

causing the guide assembly to guide the consumable-containing cartridge into an in-use position within the printing consumable holding assembly; and

performing all of the above steps with the access door of the system in its closed position.